

Chapter 3 – Getting Started in Mesa

Planning and Zoning

55 N. Center St.

Mesa, AZ 85201

Phone: 480.644.2473

Website: www.mesaaz.gov/planning

All property inside the Mesa City limits is zoned by the City Council in accordance with the City's Zoning Ordinance. Based on the type of business and the current zoning and condition of the specific location, you may be required to process applications through public hearings or advisory boards. Even if a business location already is properly zoned, a business owner may be required to provide certain on-site improvements such as parking, storm-water retention, paving, walls, fencing, architectural improvements and landscaping before opening a business. The Planning Division supplies information regarding these issues and hearing process procedures.

Specific requirements and process procedures can be determined and reviewed with the business owner using a preliminary plan review through the Planning Division. Appointments are required and fees may be assessed. Call the Planning Division's main number to schedule a meeting. Permit Services Center employees can answer general planning and zoning related questions or arrange a meeting with planning staff if needed.

Development and Sustainability

Mesa's Permit Services Center

Municipal Center

55 N. Center St.

Mesa, AZ 85201

Phone: 480.644.4273

E-mail: planreview@mesaaz.gov

Website: www.mesaaz.gov/devsustain

East Mesa Service Center

6935 E. Decatur St.

Mesa, AZ 85207

Phone: 480.644.4273

The City of Mesa offers an innovative customer service program to provide complete assistance to developers, contractors and the general public. The Permit Services Center provides customers with comprehensive information on a wide variety of development and construction-related issues.

For customer convenience, the Centers are located at the Municipal Building and the Building Safety Office at the East Mesa Service Center. Permit Services staff provide assistance with permit applications, utility availability, zoning regulations, occupancy issues, sign requirements, offsite improvements, fee schedules and related information. With the consolidated services offered at the Center, the need to visit multiple City departments is eliminated.

The City of Mesa designed the Permit Services Center to answer general questions about zoning, building and engineering development regulations in Mesa to make opening a business in Mesa more streamlined. For major projects, the Center's staff can arrange meetings with other City department representatives to move your plans through the process.

Each case is different, and the Permit Services Center staff can help you determine your zoning requirements, what permits are required and how to hook up utilities.

New Utility Service Lines or Meters

Municipal Center
55 N. Center St.
Mesa, AZ 85201
Phone: 480.644.2221

East Mesa Service Center
6935 E. Decatur St.
Mesa, AZ 85201
Phone: 480.644.4273

The Permit Services Center is the contact point for all types of public works improvement information, such as City utilities and public streets.

Center staff administer and coordinate new utility installation orders, utility service relocations, leak problems and concerns about City-owned natural gas, water or sewer facilities. The staff also issues all permits and licenses for construction or work performed within public rights-of-way or easements.

Permanent utilities for new construction, remodeling projects or relocation of existing utilities: it is the responsibility of the developer to order water, sewer and natural gas services, as needed, once the plan review process is completed and a permit is issued for development. This procedure allows ample time to install utilities before the completion of the project.

When a crew is required to install underground piping, installation occurs approximately three weeks after an order is placed. If a utility does not require underground piping, installation can normally be completed within two working days, assuming all inspection approval requirements have been met. Water meters are installed in the early stages of construction, and the contractor usually signs for and pays the bill for usage until the building is ready for occupancy. Gas and electric meters cannot be installed until the building is granted final approval.

The developer should sign for billing responsibility for all utilities (electric, gas, water, wastewater and refuse removal) upon final inspection of a building. Final approval is given when the building is completed and ready for occupancy. After the inspector approves a building and issues a release, new permanent gas or electric meters will generally be installed within two working days.

When natural gas must be turned on, a person 18 years or older needs to be present at the business location or when access to the property or meters is restricted.

Temporary water: If temporary water is needed from a fire hydrant for street work or preparation of a construction site before permanent water is available, a hydrant meter use permit can be issued. Application for a hydrant meter should be made 24 hours in advance of need.

Permits and Inspections

Municipal Building Phone: 480.644.4273

For specific code questions: 480.644.2061

East Mesa Service Center Phone: 480.644.2221

Building Safety operates a complete “one-stop shop” for all matters and permits related to construction and development within the city limits and the City of Mesa utility service areas. Applicants must obtain permits in person. Upon completion of construction and inspections for commercial developments, Certificates of Completion or Occupancy are issued. For a single residence, Building Safety releases utility meters.

City Plan Review provides one-stop convenience for all construction plan submittals, which include building, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, zoning, signage, fire and civil engineering. The review process is coordinated in-house to maximize efficiency and minimize delay.

Construction permits (private property): construction permits are issued for all new on-site construction; demolition; building alterations; remodeling and the installation or modification of electric, plumbing or mechanical systems; and fire alarm and sprinkler systems.

Current information concerning submission and review of required plans and specifications is available by phone, as well as in person. Permit fees and development impact fees are collected at the time the permit is issued.

Small projects may be reviewed and approved for a permit at the time you bring them into our offices. Others must be submitted for review and approval. Information regarding the current plan review timing may be obtained by contacting the offices. After permit approval, the field inspection staff must be contacted to schedule any required inspections.

Prior to the issuance of any new construction permits, copies of the Maricopa County Earth Moving Permit and Dust Control Plan and the Storm Water Notice of Intent must be submitted to Building Safety. Information regarding the Earth Moving Permit and Dust Control Plan can be obtained at the Maricopa County Air Quality Department by calling 602.506.6010.

Right-of-way permits: Separate off-site permits are required before construction of any work that will be performed within the public rights-of-way or a public easement, and can be obtained at the Permit Services Center located at the Building Safety Division. A Right-of-Way Permit may be required in addition to other permits and licenses for a new development. Permit and other applicable fees are collected at the time permits are issued.

Signs: Exterior advertising signs, including banners, may be installed or displayed after obtaining a sign permit. Banner signs can be displayed for up to 30 days for a grand opening. Portable signs and vehicle signs parked for advertising purposes are prohibited. Some real estate signs are exempt.

City Utilities and Services

The City of Mesa supplies water, sewer and trash/recycling services to businesses throughout the City and electric and natural gas services to certain areas. For commercial service where utility service lines and meters are existing, you must contact the Customer Service Office. To request a new service line or meter or to relocate an existing one, contact the Permit Services Center located in Building Safety Division.

Customer Service (Existing Utility Service Lines and Meters)

Municipal Building

55 N. Center St.

Phone: 480.644.2221, 1.866.406.9659

Mesa, AZ 85201

Website: www.mesaaz.gov/custserv

East Mesa Service Center

6935 E. Decatur St.

Mesa, AZ 85201

Commercial Deposits

Commercial deposits are held for three consecutive years of preferred credit, with no more than one delinquent billing in each year. If a preferred credit status has been established with the City of Mesa on a current commercial account, a deposit may not be required at a new address. There are three options for placing the deposit: Cash, Non-cash and Utility bond.

- **Cash:** This account is non-interest bearing and is either refunded, applied after three consecutive years of preferred credit, or applied to the final bill when the account is closed. If the deposit exceeds the final bill, the difference will be refunded.

- **Non-cash:** This account is interest bearing and requires setting up a savings account or a Certificate of Deposit at a local bank in the name of the legal entity applying for the commercial account. You receive interest on the monies from the bank. The City of Mesa places an assignment on the Certificate of Deposit or savings account. After preferred credit status (as described above) is established, the City will release the account via a letter sent to the bank. If the account is closed within three years, a letter of release will be sent to the bank upon payment of the final bill. There is a \$5 filing fee required with this option.
- **Utility bond:** This type of deposit is secured through an insurance or bonding company. It is issued in the name of the legal entity guaranteeing payment in case of default. After preferred credit status is established for the aforementioned three-year period, the bond can be cancelled, or if required for a longer time, renewed.

The amount of deposit for all three options is determined by taking 2.5 times the highest monthly bill for the year from a comparable business to the new business. Once the utility meters are in place at the service address, next working-day service is available. If no meter is installed, Public Works Services Counter can help you with installation procedures or refer to the next section, which explains how to have one installed.

Alarm Permits

All businesses and homes with alarms must have an alarm permit, which can be obtained at Customer Service in the Municipal Building or the East Mesa Service Center. There is a one-time \$10 fee for burglar alarms and an additional \$10 fee for hold-up/panic alarms that can be paid in person at Customer Service or sent by mail. For residents 65 and older, the fee is waived.

Fire Safety Operation Permit (FSOP)

The FSOP was established in 2007 to provide public safety personnel in Mesa with current business owner contact information, as well as to identify the operations or processes being conducted at your business. The goal is to minimize potential damage or loss of revenue to your business through quick contact with your business representative in the event of an emergency at your business. Identifying current operations at your facility also allows fire personnel the ability to respond with the appropriate resources to minimize damage caused by fire or other catastrophic events.

Every business located within Mesa city limits, excluding home-based businesses, will be required to pay the Fire Safety Operational Permit fee of \$15. Additional inspection fees are as follows:

Low Risk Facilities: no additional fee
 Medium Risk Facilities: additional \$150
 High Risk Facilities: additional \$250
 High Risk Facilities 12,000 sq.ft. additional \$200

The risk of a business is determined by many factors including the size complexity of the structure, the occupant load, occupant age, special processes or hazardous material use, and other factors. The Fire Department determines the risk classification for your business.

Trash/Recycling

Solid Waste Management Department

City of Mesa

P.O. Box 1466

Mesa, AZ 85211

Phone 480.644.222

Website: www.mesaaz.gov/waste

Service Requests/Payments

Municipal Building

55 N. Center St.

Mesa, AZ 85201

East Valley Service Center

6935 E. Decatur St.

Mesa, AZ 85207

Phone (Customer Service): 480.644.2221

Website: www.mesaaz.gov/waste

The City offers customized trash and recycling programs to all Mesa businesses. Professional staff will meet you at your business location to help assess your service needs. All businesses, regardless of size, need an efficient hauler that is able to provide cost-effective trash and recycling services. As a local, full service hauler, the City has the ability to respond to your needs in a professional and timely manner. Contact Customer Service at 480.644.2221 for specific information, to set up a customized assessment appointment, or to begin service.

Gas and Electric Services

Municipal Building
55 N. Center St.
Mesa, AZ 85201
Phone: 480.644.2221

East Valley Service Center
6935 E. Decatur St.
Mesa, AZ 85207
Phone: 480.644.2313
Website: www.mesaaz.gov/energy/initiating-service.aspx

Electric Service

If you wish to have electric service extended to your new or existing business, contact one of our City of Mesa Electric Engineers:

Ezra Domskey Electrical Engineer II
Phone: 480.644.3806
E-mail: ezra.domskey@mesaaz.gov

Dan Darms, Sr. Electrical Engineer
Phone: 480.644.3805
E-mail: dan.darms@mesaaz.gov
Hours: Monday -Thursday 7am - 6pm

Natural Gas Service

If you wish to have natural gas service extended to your new or existing business, contact a City of Mesa Utilities Representative:

Scot Sherwood, Sr Gas Engineer
Phone: 480.644.2509
E-mail: scot.sherwood@mesaaz.gov

Lori Bonilla, Utilities Development Coordinator
Phone: 480.644.2652
E-mail: lori.bonilla@mesaaz.gov
Hours: Monday -Thursday 7am - 6pm

Other Public Utilities

If your business receives utility service from Salt River Project or Southwest Gas Company instead of the City of Mesa, please check with those utility companies for their requirements, service areas and office locations.